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IN THE U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

November 7, 2001

Applicant(s) : Okimitsu YASUDA et al.

For : SULFURIC ACID RECYCLE APPARATUS

Atty. Docket No.: OPS Case 555

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT CANCELLING CLAIMS

Sir:

Prior to calculation of the filing fee in the above-identified application, kindly enter the following:

IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend Claims 3 and 5-7 as follows:

3. [(Amended)] The sulfuric acid recycle apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the reaction bath includes therein a plurality of partition plates for changing an advancing direction of the wafer cleaning waste fluid, and an inclination plate positioned at a portion closer to the gas discharge port than the partition plates for allowing the concentrated sulfuric acid to flow along the surface thereof.

5. [(Amended)] The sulfuric acid recycle apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the reaction bath has a waterdrop storage bath for preventing waterdrop attached to a ceiling surface of the reaction bath from being mixed with the concentrated sulfuric acid.

6. [(Amended)] The sulfuric acid recycle apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein fresh sulfuric acid is supplied to the concentrated sulfuric acid.

7. [(Amended)] The sulfuric acid recycle apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein a heating temperature in the reaction bath ranges from 150°C to 350°C.

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